**Diversity & Inclusion Portfolio**PART B TEMPLATE – *Use this form when completing Part B*

*Read instructions first!*

Student Name: **ADD HERE**



**Activity 6 – Reflections on Leadership Journey Material**Worth 19 points

**Question #1**

**Given two topic areas from any of the Student D & I Leadership Journey topic areas throughout the course:**

**What are the key concepts that most interesting, compelling or important to you?***(Student D & I Leadership Journey topics are listed in the instructions)*

**Student D & I Leadership Journey Topic Area #1**

**Name of Topic Area:** Diversity of Gender

**Resource used:**

* Week 5: The Myth of Equality: Glass Ceiling vs. Glass Escalator
* Week 5: The Simple Truth about the Gender Pay Gap
* Week 5: Learn where NJ ranks

**Key Concepts:**

On week 5, we learned about Diversity of Gender. Going into the topic, I knew that this has existed for a really long time now, but the things I learned other than that were really good to know about. It was interesting to learn about the myth of glass ceiling vs glass escalator. I got to learn how the metaphor glass ceiling is used when women are not given opportunities to climb up their career because of organizational bias and ignorance of their qualification. The term Glass Escalator is particularly more interesting to me. It basically symbolizes how easy it is for men to advance or succeed in women-oriented occupations like nursing, librarian, teaching, just to name a few. It is very fascinating to learn how both of these concepts refer to the same topic of women not being treated properly or not given enough opportunities.

Other thing that really surprised me was why the pay gap between men and women. I got to learn about things like choice of occupation and parenting and time away from work causes the pay gap. This is so unfair that we make or hope women to take care of the family and children and when it comes to paying them the worth, we prefer men, who just did the work, while women took care of the family for the most part and still exceled at their jobs. I understand that as an individual, I have to make my peers know about this issue and educate them. It is also an employer’s responsibility to work towards this issue and paying both genders equally. To be honest, I was really upset when I read the stats on “Learn NJ ranks” article. I knew that this has existed but didn’t understand the severity of it.

As a male and an individual, it was an eye-opener for me, and I realized that despite of being aware about this issue, I have not done anything major to help resolving it. I will continue to learn more about it and will definitely stand up for and help anyone who requires it.

**Student D & I Leadership Journey Topic Area #2**

**Name of Topic Area:** Diversity of Physical and Mental Abilities

**Resource used**:

* Week 9: Forum 4
* Week 9: Fake Cover Letters Expose Discrimination Against Disabled
* Week 9: How To Make Workplaces More Welcoming For Employees With Disabilities
* Course project of Ehimen, Emmanuel-Dike, Racine

**Key Concepts:**

All the topics here have one thing in common, which is they can all be solved with inclusion. A working environment which offers backing and consolation will help all and especially disabled employees perform to their maximum capacity and be profitable in what they do.

As mentioned in the article, Fake Cover Letters Expose Discrimination Against

Disabled, it is no new now that employers do discriminate against people of disability just because they are disabled and ignoring their qualifications. Being disabled is not a choice and I can’t wrap my head around the fact that employers and organization do not understand this simple fact. It was very upsetting to see the results the researchers found. As mentioned in the article, “The researchers, who sent résumés and cover letters on behalf of fictitious candidates for thousands of accounting jobs, found that employers expressed interest in candidates who disclosed a disability about 26 percent less frequently than in candidates who did not”.

In answering the forum question for week 9, I got to learn about different things employers can do to change this situation. For instance, in this modern age, employees can adapt the assistive technology. After reading more about it, I realized that because of the variety of available equipment it can help the disabled people in all sorts of ways. Not only that, but as mentioned in the project (Ehimen, Emmanuel-Dike, Racine - slide2) I got to learn that mental illness also falls under disability and understanding how important it is to consider this can help in a long run. Going through the same project and reading the course material (week 9: section – Inclusion strategies) I realized that, making them feel like they are heroes is also not a good way to approach this problem, but instead, spending time with them and being a little sensitive towards them can help. Disabled people are not sick, they are not in constant pain, but they are productive and even better workers (slide5), and the sooner we understand and value that thought, the better.

**How are the Student D & I Leadership Journey topics or the material read associated with the topics connected in some way?**

As mentioned before, it all comes down to whether an employee is feeling included and comfortable in the environment they are working in. If people just be less selfish and start thinking about others just a little more, all these issues can be resolved. It is not going to happen overnight, but we have to start somewhere at least. Another connection among these topics is that people with “faults” labeled by society are the ones that get discriminated against. Topics like gender pay gap, discrimination of race and religion, discrimination against disabled people still exist and only getting severe. To name another thing that connects all these issues is education, education about the issues that exist and the solutions that also exist. Many people feel helpless when they are discriminated against, and that is because no one ever told them about the legal remedies that exist which can at least give them a chance to fight back. Many people are also never made aware of these issues which unintentionally makes them a part of the problem.



**Activity 7 – Your Diversity and Inclusion Story**

Worth 40 points

**Question #2**

**What is your diversity and inclusion story?**

Growing up in India, I have always understood and valued diversity of all kinds. India is a very diverse nation where there are people practicing 9 different religions and speak over 20 main and about 20,000 other languages. I feel very lucky that I grew up in an environment with people who always valued and respected each other’s race and religion. I identify myself as a Hindu male, but the only religion I try to practice is humanity.

The positive and inclusive mindset that I have is all because of my upbringing and my parents, and I will be grateful for that forever. Since India is still a developing nation, not everyone thinks that way, meaning, growing up I have seen people discriminating against the most minor things. Even as kids, I have had friends who were instructed by their parents to not to play with kids living in the same neighborhood but of different religion. Thankfully, my parents never made me do that and always taught me to include and be kind to everyone.

Moving to the United States was a big step in my life just like every other immigrant. Leaving all the friends and family behind, starting a new life here was not easy, and to be honest, it still isn’t. I didn’t feel comfortable at all around all the new people here and had a hard time getting along with everyone. Everything, literally everything is different here than India. The culture, the education system, or even the most minor thing as talking to people is different here than India. Of course, I ended up liking it here, but it was very challenging at first.

I would like to share my personal experience here also. Since we were new in the country, people had hard time understanding our accents, and it’s not even that we didn’t speak English. Mind you, India is the largest English-speaking nation in the world. Our neighbor hated the fact that we couldn’t speak in a proper accent and even hated how we looked or conversed around with others. I will not go into more specifics, but I had a very hard time coping with that, there were times when I was scared of that white man because of the things he said to me. I understand now that being part of this very developed nation has its pros and cons. I did face some racism, but I cannot ignore some other things like the education and career opportunities that I have here.

I understood soon enough how things are going to be. I realized that because I belong to a minority and do not look like most people around me, I might never be treated respectfully.

Cut to year 2020, yes, things were bad initially, but it has changed as well. I am not treated as bad as I used to be. I also understood that things have to change, and I cannot just be scared and not stand up against it, that’ll only make it worse. The experiences that I have had here helped me grow as a person and made me think maturely. I speak my mind out now and speak up against things that I feel are not right. Leaving my country was a huge step, but I am also thankful for the opportunities that I have had here, and I could never have been this independent if I had stayed in India and didn’t have stepped out of my comfort zone.



*Congratulations*, you’ve completed Part B of your Diversity & Inclusion Portfolio!

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